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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 008373

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P, EUR AND PM; JCS FOR VCJCS, J5 LTG CASEY AND J3; OSD FOR ASD RODMAN AND ASD CROUCH; CENTCOM FOR POLAD AND J5

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#) [UK](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: ISAF COMMANDER MG ZORLU'S VISIT TO THE US -
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEETINGS WITH USG OFFICIALS

(U) Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Robert Deutsch.
Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See para 5.

[1](#)2. (C) MFA DDG for South Asian Affairs Aydin Evirgen recently informed Deputy Pol-Mil Counselor that ISAF Commander MG Zorlu would be traveling to the US November 20-26 to meet with USG and UN officials and private organizations to discuss Turkey's experience as ISAF lead nation and the general security situation in Afghanistan. Zorlu is scheduled to be in Washington November 21-22 and in New York November 25-26. Evirgen said the visit was MG Zorlu's idea, but stressed that it enjoyed widespread support within the Turkish General Staff (TGS) and the MFA. (TGS Navy Captain Sinani separately told Deputy Pol-Mil Counselor November 15 that the TGS leadership supported the visit as an opportunity to increase awareness in the US of the role that Turkey is playing in Afghanistan and in the larger global war on terrorism.)

[1](#)3. (C) Evirgen said the Turkish Embassy in Washington was attempting to schedule meetings with senior USG officials and asked that the Embassy support these efforts. According to Evirgen, the Turkish Embassy initially requested appointments with the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but has since learned the two will be in Prague for the NATO Summit. The Turkish Embassy reportedly is now trying to schedule meetings with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and VCJCS Gen Pace. Evirgen also noted that the MFA believed it would be a good idea for MG Zorlu to meet with a senior State Department official and said he would ask the Turkish Embassy in Washington to request a meeting with U/S Grossman.

[1](#)4. Comment: Given that MG Zorlu has been stationed in Kabul since June and focusing his attention on ISAF-related issues, we do not expect him to initiate discussion with USG officials on Iraq, nor do we expect him to be intimately familiar with the details of the discussions between US and Turkish officials on Iraq.

[1](#)5. (C) Action request: The Embassy strongly supports the visit of MG Zorlu to the US and recommends that the Department of Defense (OSD and JCS) and the State Department receive MG Zorlu at the highest possible level. By all accounts, MG Zorlu -- who was hand-picked by TGS CHOD Ozkok -- has done an excellent job as ISAF commander since taking over in June. By receiving Zorlu at an appropriately high level, the USG can reinforce the importance we attach to the strategic partnership and our appreciation for Turkey's performance as ISAF lead nation.

PEARSON